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January 23, 2002

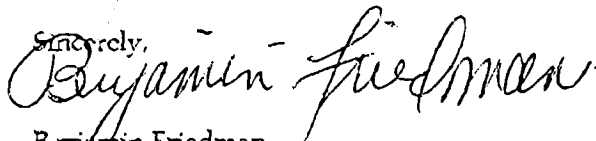
Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I would like to take a moment to express my opinions regarding the Microsoft antitrust case. I think I might feel differently about Microsoft if it had become powerful by malicious intent, but it achieved its position because it made a better mousetrap and sold it at the lowest price. I am a supporter and avid user of Microsoft products, and would like to see this case put behind us.

Although the settlement may reach further than Microsoft may have wished, it realizes that settling the case sooner, is better than later. In order to do this, it has agreed to concessions that make antitrust precedent. Microsoft has granted broad new rights to computer makers, software engineers, and to consumers. It has allowed them to configure Windows so as to promote non-Microsoft programs that compete with the programs already included within. Also, Microsoft has agreed to document and disclose various interfaces within its Windows operating system. This boils down to Microsoft opening its doors to the competition, and allowing them to use its invention to promote their own competing products.

Imagine if Nike put Reebok logos on its shoes, or if Ford built cars with Toyota engines. It seems ridiculous when considering products that we are more familiar with, but nevertheless, Microsoft has agreed to these concessions to speed a conclusion. We should consider the very foundations of free enterprise and competition and realize that the longer this case precedes, the greater the risk that we may cause irreparable damage to the IT industry, and the economy.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Friedman

cc: Representative Christopher Cox